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**Montana Fish,
Wildlife & Parks
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LEGISLATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL
POLICY OFFICE

March 2, 2005

Dear Reader,

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks have developed an environmental assessment (EA) to address proposed improvements at Hell Creek State Park.

FWP, Region 7 manages the State Park. Hell Creek State Park is located 26 miles north of Jordan, MT and lies against FT. Peck Reservoir.

The proposed improvements include: Office building replacement, employee housing development, and construction of an equipment storage building. The projects are predicted to begin in May of 2005 and completion is scheduled for December of 2006.

The improvements are needed to address the ever increasing public use of and visitation to the park. Park visitation has increased from 9,300 in 1995 to over 35,000 in 2003.

Comments are due on or before March 31, 2005 and can be submitted to:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Cathy Stewart: Parks Division
P.O. Box 1630
Miles City, MT 59301

Electronic comments are welcome by e-mail and can be submitted to:
cstewart@mt.gov

Respectfully,

Bryce Christensen
Regional Supervisor
(406) 234-0913

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS



ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS MEPA/NEPA CHECKLIST

MISSION. Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks, through its employees and citizen commission, provides for the stewardship of the fish, wildlife, parks and recreational resources of Montana, while contributing to the quality of life for present and future generations

All Montanans have the right to live in a clean and healthful environment. This brief environmental analysis is intended to provide an evaluation of the likely impacts to the human environment from proposed actions of the project cited below. This analysis will help Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks to fulfill its oversight obligations and satisfy rules and regulations of both the Montana Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The project sponsor has a responsibility to ensure that all impacts have been addressed. Some effects may be negative; others may be positive. Please provide a discussion for each section. If no impacts are likely, be sure to discuss the reasoning that led to your determination.

PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION

1. Type of proposed action.

Development X

Renovation

Maintenance X

Land Acquisition

Equipment Acquisition

Other (Describe)

2. If appropriate, agency responsible for the proposed action.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

3. Name, address phone number and E-mail address of project sponsor.

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks
Cathy Stewart cstewart@mt.gov
Parks Division
PO Box 1630
Miles City, MT 59301

4. Name of project.

Hell Creek State Park- Office Replacement, Employee Housing, and Equipment Storage Building Project

5. If applicable:

Estimated construction/commencement date
May 2005

Estimated completion date
December, 2006

Current status of project design (% complete)

6. Location affected by proposed action (county, range and township).
T22N,R38E,S6; Garfield County

7. Project size: estimate the numbers of acres that would be directly affected that are 1.5 currently:

(a) Developed:

residential 0 acres

industrial..... 0 acres

(b) Open Space/Woodlands/

Recreation..... 1.5 acres

(c) Wetlands/Riparian

Areas..... 0 acres

(d) Floodplain 0 acres

(e) Productive:

irrigated cropland..... 0 acres

dry cropland 0 acres

forestry 0 acres

rangeland..... 0 acres

other 0 acres

8. Map/site plan: attach an original 8 1/2" x 11" or larger section of the most recent USGS 7.5' series topographic map showing the location and boundaries of the area that would be affected by the proposed action. A different map scale may be substituted if more appropriate or if required by agency rule. If available, a site plan should also be attached.

9. Narrative summary of the proposed action or project including the benefits and purpose of the proposed action.

BACKGROUND:

Hell Creek State Park, 26 miles north of Jordan, Montana, is located on the south shore of the 150 mile long Fort Peck Reservoir. Hell Creek is the closest access point on Fort Peck to the Interstate Highway system and Montana's major population centers. Due to that fact, the park serves as the major access point

to the south shore of the reservoir for boaters and boating anglers. Efforts by Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks Fisheries Division and Walleyes Unlimited of Montana in the mid-1980s resulted in a dramatic increase in both the size and number of walleyes in the reservoir. In the early 1990s local anglers rediscovered Fort Peck, and within a few years the word was out nationwide on this burgeoning walleye fishery. Park visitation increased from 9,300 visitors in 1995 to over 35,000 in 2003. These visitors come from the mid-western states, Colorado and all the larger cities and towns in Montana. Visitors often camp in the park for a week or longer and boat from the park daily to the popular fishing areas. To keep up with the dramatic increase in visitors, Hell Creek State Park has under gone approximately \$2,000,000 in development projects over the course of the past six years. Approximately 75% of this funding has been cost shared by the Federal Wallop Breaux grant program due to the fact Hell Creek is recognized as a major motorboat site on Fort Peck Reservoir.

Among these recently completed projects are:

- Extension and expansion of boat launching facilities;
- Expansion of parking areas to accommodate vehicles with boat trailers;
- Potable water system with hydrants in the campground;
- Restroom/Shower facility;
- RV dump station;
- Fish cleaning station (cooperative project with Jordan Chapter, Walleyes Unlimited);
- Playground (cooperative project with Jordan Chapter Walleyes Unlimited);
- Renovation of group use shelter building;
- Reshaping and gravelling of 12 miles of the 26-mile long Hell Creek access road (cooperative project with Garfield County).

Six years of drought has contributed to record low water levels at Fort Peck, leaving all existing boat ramps unusable along with the existing surface water system that supplies potable water for the park. To assure continued recreational access to the reservoir and water for the campground facilities, the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers drilled a 1200 foot well last fall and will construct 1.25 miles of road along the beach of Hell Creek bay to a new boat ramp this early spring. The well will provide water for the park until such time as reservoir levels rebound to the point where the existing surface water system is again operational. The new boat ramp will serve the same purpose. Without operable boat launching facilities, visitation to the park would be virtually nonexistent.

PROPOSED PROJECT:

In the early 1990's, a 1970's mobile home was moved into the campground to serve as a make shift park office and park headquarters. At the time, Parks staff didn't anticipate an almost four fold increase in visitor numbers in only seven years. Nor did staff foresee that \$2,000,000 of improvement projects would become reality. These factors forced reassignment of two maintenance and visitor service positions to Hell Creek and the hiring of a Park Manager to provide on site management during the spring, summer and fall. Due to the remoteness of the Park, 26 miles north of Jordan and 110 miles from the Miles City Regional Headquarters, the trailer soon began to double as a dormitory for park and regional maintenance crews. Also, the lack of affordable housing in the immediate area forced the Park Manager to make the mobile home his residence as well. These additional demands exceeded the utility of the dilapidated old trailer.

The marked increase in visitation and increased complexity of site maintenance, coupled with shrinking reservoir levels, necessitated more stopgap measures. A temporary equipment storage area and shop facility have been cobbled together adjacent to the mobile home.

Beginning in 1999, the Paleontology Department of the Museum of the Rockies established a field station within Hell Creek State Park. The site of this field station is on the western boundary of the park. The Museum of the Rockies conducted a planned six-year reconnaissance of the paleo resources of the area surrounding the park. This work was completed in 2004. To accommodate the needs of the field station, electrical power and phone service were installed at this location. Both of these services remain. FWP proposes to relocate the employee living quarters and the park shop and equipment storage area to this location. As stated above, telephone and electrical service exist at this site. Water and septic services are located nearby.

Exhibit 'A' attached illustrates proposed developments and site locations.

Specifically, the proposed project will:

- Remove the existing 30-year-old mobile home (existing park office) from the park.
- Remove the existing 30-year old storage shed from the campground.
- Install a new prefabricated office/visitor contact station at the south edge of campground.
- Construct a volunteer host pad site east of the proposed office/visitor contact building. The host pad would include a septic system, and water/electrical hookups.
- Place two (2) prefabricated employee-housing units west of the main campground, above the entrance road.
- Construct 3-bay shop and lean-to equipment storage facility west of main campground, above the entrance road.
- Consolidate parks staff, equipment, vehicles and maintenance facilities out of the main campground area.

The prefabricated office and housing units are proposed due to several factors the Parks Division have considered and investigated, including the success other state park systems have had with the prefabricated office/housing approach, and the fact it would be prohibitively expensive to construct conventional stick-frame buildings at this remote location.

Making these changes and additions to Hell Creek State Park will enable management of the park to become more centralized and not detract from the natural aesthetics of the park. A new office and host pad area will provide visitors a central location for information gathering or help in case of emergencies. It will allow employees to become more organized. Residence housing will help with recruitment and retention issues. The park is 26 miles north on a dirt road from the nearest town, Jordan. On-site resident housing will eliminate some of the logistical problems employees have experienced with commuting to and from work and with retention of experienced employees. Installation of a shop and equipment storage area will provide employees a safe and appropriate area to perform equipment maintenance and repair outside of the campground resulting in improved maintenance and visitor services.

10. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives (including the required no action alternative) to the proposed action whenever alternatives are reasonably available and prudent to consider and a comparison of the alternatives with the proposed action/preferred alternative:

No Action- the alternative of no action will leave the park in its current state, which is functional, however not putting forth the organized well cared for image that the public and site deserve. Employee and retention issues will continue. Park visitation will increase once Fort Peck reservoir water levels rebound.

With the no action alternative, a management presence will not be present in the park to address indiscriminate use that often results in pioneered roadways, littering and other negative impacts to the resource that so often comes with increased public use of an area. In short, visitor services will not meet demands.

11. Listing of each local, state or federal agency that has overlapping or additional jurisdiction.

(a) Permits		
Agency Name: Department of Environmental Quality; Department of Labor, Building Codes Bureau	Permit: Change to Public Water System Building Permit	Date Filed:

(b) Funding	
Agency Name: Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks	Funding Amount: \$150,000 - \$175,000

(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities	
Agency Name: Army Corps of Engineers	Type of Responsibility: Landowner

12. List of agencies consulted during preparation of this Environmental Checklist:
Army Corps of Engineers, Fort Peck, Montana

13. Name of Preparer(s) of this Environmental Checklist:
Cathy Stewart, Park Manager, Parks Division, Montana Fish Wildlife and Parks
406-234-0926 cstewart@mt.gov

14. Date submitted.

February 28, 2005

PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Land Resources" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on land resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

1. LAND RESOURCES Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X			
c. Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				
f. Other						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

b. Installation of park office, host pad, residence housing, and a shop will result in some disruption, displacement, compaction, and over-covering during the construction phase. Additionally, existing pioneered roadways will be eliminated and re-vegetated to natural condition.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Air" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on air resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

2. AIR Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (also see 13 (c))			X			
b. Creation of objectionable odors?			X			
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. Any discharge that will conflict with federal or state air quality regs?		X				
f. Other						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

- a. During construction equipment emissions will contain some pollutants.
- b. During construction equipment emissions will contain some odors.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Water" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on water resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

3. WATER	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. Effects to a designated floodplain?		X				
m. Any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations?		X				
n. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

None of the items addressed in this checklist would be applicable.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Vegetation" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on vegetative resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

4. VEGETATION	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?			X			
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X			
f. Effects to wetlands or prime and unique farmland?		X				
g. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

- b. During the construction phase, plant communities will be disrupted in the site locations. Following the construction phase, disturbed areas will be reseeded.
- e. Potential for importation of weeds onto disturbed soils that will be revegetated. Site already monitored for weeds.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Fish/Wildlife" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on fish and wildlife resources. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

5. FISH/WILDLIFE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X			
h. Adverse effects to threatened/endangered species or their habitat?		X				
i. Introduction or exportation of any species not presently or historically occurring in the affected location?		X				
j. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

g. Potential for temporary minor disturbance due to increased human activity during the five-month recreation season.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Noise/Electrical Effects” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects of noise and electrical activities. Even if you checked “none” in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

6. NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
a. Increases in existing noise levels?		X				
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				
e. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

None of the items addressed in this checklist would be applicable. Relocation of maintenance area will reduce noise levels in the campground.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Land Use" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on land use. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects.

7. LAND USE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. A conflict with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. A conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on, or relocation of, residences?		X				
e. Compliance with existing land policies for land use, transportation, and open space?		X				
f. Increased traffic hazards, traffic volume, or speed limits or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
g. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

None of the items addressed in this checklist would be applicable. Relocation of maintenance area will result in a decrease of traffic volume in the campground.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Risk/Health Hazards" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects of risks and health hazards. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects of the action as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

8. RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?		X				
b. Effects on existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan or create need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?		X				
d. Disturbance to any sites with known or potential deposits of hazardous materials?		X				
e. The use of any chemical toxicants?		X				
f. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

None of the items addressed in this checklist would be applicable.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Community Impact" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on the community. Even if you checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

9. COMMUNITY IMPACT	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?		X				
f. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

None of the items addressed in this checklist would be applicable.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Public Services/Taxes/Utilities” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on public services, taxes and utilities. Even if you checked “none” in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

10. PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. An effect upon, or result in a need for new or altered, governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If so, specify:		X				
b. Effects on the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				
c. A need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Increased used of any energy source?			X			
e. Other.						
Additional information requested:						
f. Define projected revenue sources.	\$37,500 in funding will come from existing Montana State Parks proprietary sources (25%). In addition, this amount will be matched to secure up to an additional \$112,500 in federal funding (75%) upon application by the Department and final approval by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS). The scope of this project is contingent upon final approval by the USFWS.					
g. Define projected maintenance costs.	Projected maintenance costs will be absorbed into existing State Parks budgets.					

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

- c. Slight increase in electrical consumption. Increase will be minor.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Aesthetics/Recreation” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on aesthetics & recreation. Even if you checked “none” in the

above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

11. AESTHETICS/RECREATION	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report)		X				
d. Adverse effects to any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas?		X				
e. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

None of the items in this checklist would be applicable. Relocation of maintenance area outside of the campground will improve the aesthetic character of the campground. Removal of older facilities and replacing with newer buildings will also improve on the aesthetic character of Hell Creek State Park.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this “Cultural/historical Resources” checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects on cultural/historical resources. Even if you checked “none” in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

12. CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action result in:						
a. Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				
b. Physical changes that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. Adverse effects to historic or cultural resources?		X				
e. Other:						

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

a. The area is known for its paleontological resources, however, the sites identified for development are located on soils from a different geological formation thus eliminating any chance for disturbance of said sites.

HUMAN ENVIRONMENT. At the bottom of this "Summary Evaluation of Significance" checklist, provide a narrative description and evaluation of the cumulative and secondary effects. Even if you have checked "none" in the above table, explain how you came to that conclusion. Consider the immediate, short-term effects as well as the long-term effects. Attach additional pages of narrative if needed.

13. SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE	IMPACT				Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant		
Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:						
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources which create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. Have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy?		X				
Additional information requested:						
g. List any federal or state permits required.	State Building Code Permit					

NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION AND EVALUATION:

None of the items in this checklist are applicable. Proposed project will "clean-up" existing maintenance area within Hell Creek State Park by removing old, dilapidated buildings and erecting new, more functional buildings in an area removed from the campground.

PART III. ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST CONCLUSION SECTION

1. Discuss the cumulative and secondary effects of this project as a whole.
This project will have some minor cumulative and secondary effects, however, none of them are potentially significant. The area has already gone through significant development stages. The current proposed project is minor in nature.

2. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this Environmental Checklist (Part II), is an EIS required?

YES _____

NO x

If an EIS is not required, explain why the current checklist level of review is appropriate.

The current checklist level of review is appropriate because the project is minimal development inside an already developed area used for recreation. It will have no significant or long lasting impacts on water, air, human health etc... The items listed in the checklist are more than sufficient.

3. Describe the public involvement for this project.
The EA will be put out for a 30-day public comment period by means of two legal publications and web access.

4. What was the duration of the public comment period?
30 days

GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Affected Environment – The aspects of the human environment that may change as a result of an agency action.

Alternative – A different approach to achieve the same objective or result as the proposed action.

Categorical Exclusion – A level of environmental review for agency action that do not individually, collectively, or cumulatively cause significant impacts to the human environment, as determined by rulemaking or programmatic review, and for which an EA or EIS is not required.

Cumulative Impacts – Impacts to the human environment that, individually, may be minor for a specific project, but, when considered in relation to other actions, may result in significant impacts.

Direct Impacts – Primary impacts that have a direct cause and effect relationship with a specific action, i.e. they occur at the same time and place as the action that causes the impact.

Environmental Assessment (EA) – The appropriate level of environmental review for actions that either does not significantly affect the human environment or for which the agency is uncertain whether an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required.

Environmental Assessment Checklist – An EA checklist is a standard form of an EA, developed by an agency for actions that generally produce minimal impacts.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – A comprehensive evaluation of the impacts to the human environment that likely would result from an agency action or reasonable alternatives to that action. An EIS also serves a public disclosure of agency decision-making. Typically, an EIS is prepared in two steps. The Draft EIS is a preliminary detailed written statement that facilitates public review and comment. The Final EIS is a completed, written statement that includes a summary of major conclusions and supporting information from the Draft EIS, responses to substantive comments received on the Draft EIS, a list of all comments on the Draft EIS and any revisions made to the Draft EIS and an explanation of the agency's reasons for its decision.

Environmental Review – An evaluation, prepared in compliance with the provisions of MEPA and the MEPA Model Rules, of the impacts to the human environment that may result as a consequence of an agency action.

Human Environment – Those attributes, including but not limited to biological, physical, social, economic, cultural, and aesthetic factors that interrelate to form the environment.

Long-Term Impact – An impact, which lasts well beyond the period of the initial project.

Mitigated Environmental Assessment – The appropriate level of environmental review for actions that normally would require an EIS, except that the state agency can impose designs, enforceable controls, or stipulations to reduce the otherwise significant impacts to below the level of significance. A mitigated EA must demonstrate that: (1) all impacts have been identified; (2) all impacts can be mitigated below the level of significance; and (3) no significant impact is likely to occur.

Mitigation – An enforceable measure(s), designed to reduce or prevent undesirable effects or impacts of the proposed action.

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) – The federal counterpart of MEPA that applies only to federal actions.

No Action Alternative – An alternative, required by the MEPA Model Rules for purposes of analysis, that describes the agency action that would result in the least change to the human environment.

Public Participation – The process by which an agency includes interested and affected individuals, organizations, and agencies in decision making.

Record of Decision – Concise public notice that announces the agency's decision, explains the reason for that decision, and describes any special conditions related to implementation of the decision.

Scoping – The process, including public participation, that an agency uses to define the scope of the environmental review.

Secondary Impacts – Impacts to the human environment that are indirectly related to the agency action, i.e. they are induced by a direct impact and occur at a later time or distance from the triggering action.

Short-Term Impact – An impact directly associated with a project that is of relatively short duration.

Significance – The process of determining whether the impacts of a proposed action are serious enough to warrant the preparation of an EIS. An impact may be adverse, beneficial or both. If none of the adverse impacts are significant, an EIS is not required.

Supplemental Review – A modification of a previous environmental review document (EA or EIS) based on changes in the proposed action, the discovery of new information, or the need for additional evaluation.

Tiering – Preparing an environmental review by focusing specifically on narrow scope of issues because the broader scope of issues was adequately addressed in previous environmental review document(s) that may be incorporated by reference.



